



Stepps Parish Church

***Welcome to the May 2023 edition of
Prospect***

*In this edition there is our usual
features with updates from LHM as
well as congregational news.*

Information about Christian Aid week

*Save the Date for Celebration
Coronation Afternoon Tea.*

General Assembly 2023 News

*If you have any ideas for additional
features, please get in touch.*

May 2023

Issue 420

Scottish Charity No.
SC014212

PROSPECT

**Magazine of Stepps Parish
Church**

Contact Us:

Minister: Currently Vacant

Session Clerk: Lorraine Robertson
sessionclerkspc2020@gmail.com

Church Organist / musician:

Alastair Sim 0141 779 1101

**Watch us on YouTube each
Sunday at 11.00 am.**

Follow us on Facebook.

www.steppsparishchurch.org

At the heart of our
community celebrating
faith and life to the full.

To submit an item for Prospect please
email Lorraine on

sessionclerkspc2020@gmail.com



Stepps Parish Church

Minister: Currently Vacant

Interim Moderator: Deacon
Claire Herbert

CHerbert@churchofscotland.org.uk

Mobile 07960 546553

Session Clerk

Lorraine Robertson

Tel: 0141 286-0086

Email:
sessionclerkspc2020@gmail.com



Sunday Services Morning Worship at 11am

The Scottish Government have removed all COVID rules and restrictions, but the virus has not gone away. Instead of legal constraints the government are asking people to use 'COVID sense' to help protect themselves and others. The same principal of using 'COVID sense' should apply to our church buildings, congregational activities and the support you offer communities.

[Getting your vaccine](#) when offered to ensure you are fully protected.

Staying at home and resting if you have symptoms.

Opening windows when meeting indoors

[Wearing a face covering](#) in indoor public places and encouraging the use of face coverings in church buildings wherever possible.

Washing your hands to protect each other.

Taking an LFD test if you have symptoms or before visiting someone in a hospital or care home.

Please continue to follow the website for information about our Services. We look forward to welcoming you all back with us again. For those who are unable to return with us at this time we will continue to stream our weekly Sunday services on our Stepps Parish Church YouTube channel

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCI7mTSz5OI-vW-qMKKjCXAww>



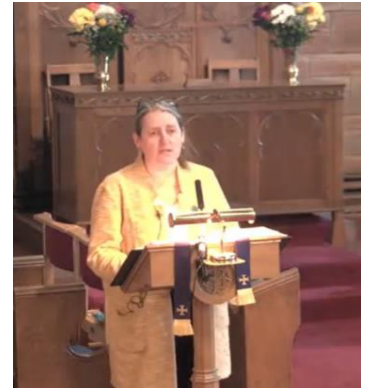
Charity No: SC014212

Pastoral Letter Deacon Claire Herbert

April is drawing to a close, as I write, and preparations nationally are underway for the coronation of a new monarch. In a little over a week, we will mark the coming of the Carolean Era.

Many are asking what might characterize that new era?

What kind of leadership and innovation may be the focus of this period?



Sunday by Sunday in worship we have been exploring the season of Eastertide, the fifty days from Easter Sunday to Pentecost. The time The Risen Christ appeared to witnesses until His ascension to the heavenly throne and the blessing of the Holy Spirit upon the believers at Pentecost. The beginning of a new era. Followers of Christ, the king who had been crucified, began to grow in numbers and form the nucleus of communities which others would call the church or 'the people of the way'.

As 'people of the way' we hold in prayer those commissioners to The Church of Scotland's annual gathering of The General Assembly at the end of May. Glasgow Presbytery are able to report that their draft Presbytery Mission Plan - a strategy for the sharing of the Kingdom work across this region - has been submitted to the Presbytery Mission Plan Implementation Group nationally for consideration. Here at Stepps, we are beginning to see the emergence of our new worship team leaders as they begin to take a greater role and provide team led services of worship during the month of May.

There is much around us that is changing on the cusp of this new era. While this creates opportunities and new possibilities, time is needed to let go of what has been necessary to carry in the Elizabethan Age thus far. We must open the gate, open the door, open the tomb and open our hands in order that we may grasp those 'might be' moments ahead.

Thankful that our eternal King, is also our Shepherd and leads all His sheep safely to the green pasture; a place of tranquility, welcome, and where life in all its fullness is lived. May it be our prayer, on the cusp of the Carolean age, that all 'people of the way', here in Stepps, across Glasgow and nationally would be flocked together in community, be called the church, and their number be added to daily just as it was at the dawn of the Christian era.

Claire

Deacon Claire Herbert

Interim Moderator.

Chaplain LHM

Session Clerk Letter

May is fast approaching and already it is shaping up to be a busy month. I certainly hope it remembers to warm up into the bargain.



The first of the big events is of course the Coronation weekend and whether it is your thing or not it will be hard to escape all the fuss and splendor of the event. I must admit to being a bit of a history buff. I love all things period so being around to witness this historic event will be quite something. The unique Golden Coach, the Scepter and the Orb, the ancestral ceremony involved in moving the Stone of Destiny from Edinburgh to Westminster Abbey, all quite fascinating and holds something quite mystical, thinking of past Kings and Queens.

How this differs from our recent journey through the Easter Story. Hearing of our Lord Jesus Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem on a simple donkey. How Jesus wept as he approached the city, knowing the suffering that awaited, his cleansing of the temple from the shady exploits of money changers and merchants disrespecting the sacred city. The story is so familiar and recently presented to us by the children of our Sunday Club. That moving, wonderful procession celebrated in simple jubilation by the waving of our palm leaves as we recounted how the crowd welcomed the Messiah... our servant King so vastly different to what we will witness during the procession in London.

How painful for us to remember Jesus being mocked by Pontius Pilate as '**King of the Jews**' before sentencing him to death. The simple recognition by one who did wrong, sentenced to die alongside him yet seeking forgiveness as he scolded his fellow criminal, acknowledging their wrongdoing, getting what they deserved and telling others that 'Jesus did nothing wrong.' In his hour of anguish, the robber turned to Jesus saying....

..... "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." Jesus answered him, "Truly, I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."

(Luke 23: 42-43)

(NIV)

The children will once again remind us of our Servant King over the Coronation weekend and I look forward to them retelling us the story in their own unique way and I hope you can all be there too.

When God brought Jesus to life again through the resurrection, he showed the world that Jesus really was the chosen '**King**' and I for one will never tire of hearing of that particular moment in history.

As always.

Lorraine

May Door Welcome Duty



May	Welcome at Door	Welcome	Beadle
7 th	C. Skinner	E. Watson	J. Thomson
14 th	H. Baker.	J. Burns	L. Ashmole
21 st	S. Baker	S. Gowans	H. Baker
28 th	A. Macdonald	R. McGovern	S. Baker
June 4 th	F. McGovern	S. MacLean	J. Burns

If you are unable to do your weekly rota. Please ensure you arrange someone to cover.

June Thomson

Tea Rota



May 7 th	S. MacLean	L. Robertson
14 th	H. Baker	E. Corbett
21 st	S. Gowans	E. Watson
28 th	S. MacLean	R. McGovern
June 4 th	S. MacLean	L. Robertson

Stepps Parish Church

Free Celebration Afternoon Tea

Monday 8th May 2.00 – 4.00



Community Event for All

Stepps Parish Church

17 Whitehill Avenue, G33 6BL



**190th GLASGOW COMPANY,
THE BOYS' BRIGADE**

It's been a packed couple of months, with more to come. Currently we're preparing for our Annual Display and Summer Programme. Dates coming up:

8th May: Boys' and families garden party for the Coronation.

15th May: Annual Inspection and Display.

21st May: We will be leading a Summer Service on Sunday morning.

22nd May to end of June: Summer Programme, finishing with a trip to the Falkirk Wheel.

After that, we will take a break over the Summer holidays and return in August. As always, new recruits are always welcome.

Colin Goodall

Captain

colingoodall91@hotmail.com

**190th Glasgow
Company
The Boys' Brigade**



Monday 8th May 2023

Stepps Parish Church

6.00pm

Payment By Donation





First of all, a big thankyou to everyone who donated Easter eggs to the LHM Easter appeal. These were distributed during Easter week to homeless accommodations throughout Glasgow. There are lots of pictures on the LHM Facebook page if you want to see exactly where the eggs went.

The Mission continues to be busy with record numbers being seen for lunches over the last month. The activity programme is in full swing now and this month's outing was to the football to see Partick Thistle v Ayr United which was enjoyed by all who attended. The weekly Bingo and Dominos tournament are also very popular. We are lucky to have Glasgow life also doing art group on a Thursday morning.

For those of you wishing to donate Tomato Soup, Beans, Sugar and UHT milk are items that we always run low of.

You may (or not) be aware that Glasgow City Council HSCP have to cut 22 million from its budget this year and is projected to run out of funds by September for key services. HSCP are looking to make cuts in every area of its support this includes support for children and families, personal care, addiction and homelessness amongst others. It's at times like this that the LHM is most needed. Due to the nature of the Mission and the experience of its staff we can adapt to offer support and advice to anyone who is affected by these cuts. These cuts will not only affect those who receive services through HSCP but the dedicated staff whose job's will be lost as these cuts are made.

I ask that you keep all those affected by these cuts in your prayers over the next few months.

God bless.

Jacqueline.



Christian Aid week 2023

As is our custom in Stepps we will be supporting Christian Aid week again this year which runs from Sunday 14 May to Saturday 20 May. With Rev. Sally Foster-Fulton, who leads Christian Aid in Scotland and attended Gordon's retiral tea being moderator designate, there is a deep commitment to continue to promote the life changing work they do.

To celebrate and share the work of Christian Aid and its' partners, the worship team will be leading our Christian Aid service on Sunday 14 May.

As in recent years, donations can be made using envelopes available on the back table at church. These can be added to the offering plate. If you are unable to come to church in person, then do speak to a trusted friend or your elder who can assist. Alternatively donations can be made online at the Christian Aid week 2023 webpage.

Donations will go to supporting families in Malawi to overcome the devastating effects of cyclone Freddy, which flooded many crops. Alongside this the cost of fuel, fertiliser, food and school fees has greatly increased making it more difficult to be self-sustainable farmers in a country impacted so significantly by climate change increasing both droughts and floods. There will be daily devotional booklets to take home on the table too for those that want to spend time in more focussed prayer for individuals affected.



The effect of cyclone Freddy in Malawi

We have been blessed by having wonderful individuals supporting us in our time of transition in Stepps. Hopefully in turn, we can pass a blessing on to others through supporting Christian Aid and its partners.

Moderator of the General Assembly 2023

The 2023 General Assembly will be held from Saturday 20th.

May until Thursday 25th May. It will once again be a hybrid event, with some attending in the Assembly Hall and others participating online. The proceedings will be livestreamed on the Church's website.



Rev. Sally Foster-Fulton

The General Assembly's first act will be to install the 2023-24 Moderator, Rev Sally Foster Fulton, who has taken a year's leave from her role as Head of Christian Aid Scotland to take up the role of ambassador for the Church. This year's agenda will include discussions about widespread reforms initiated in 2019 to respond to the challenges facing the Church and to make a sustainable plan for delivering ministry and mission for the future.

The head of Christian Aid, a charity which fights global poverty, will serve as the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 2023-24.

Rev Sally Foster-Fulton, who has led Christian Aid in Scotland since 2016, will take a year's sabbatical to become the Kirk's ambassador at home and abroad in May 2023, succeeding the 2022-23 Moderator, the Right Rev Dr Iain Greenshields.

Key reports:

The Assembly Business Committee report looks at the progress of presbytery reform. The reforms, which began in 2021, will reduce the number of regional presbyteries from 46 in 2019 to 11.

Five of the new presbyteries have begun work over the last year and a Presbytery of the Highlands and Hebrides will launch on 1 January 2024.

The Assembly Trustees report will present a detailed overview of the state of the Church as it seeks to move away from outdated structures and create sustainable new ways of working.

Rev David Cameron, convener of the Assembly Trustees, said the General Assembly reports detail the breadth and depth of the reforms as well as explaining why they are essential and the way ahead.

"This is a critical time for the Church as we make the essential changes needed to lay a sustainable foundation for the future," he said.

"As Assembly Trustees we know how hard the last year has been for congregations, presbyteries and at a national level. We are grateful to the ministers, elders, church members and staff who have been pulling together faithfully to solve the serious challenges we face and making some very difficult decisions for the greater good.

"A growing, flourishing Church is within our reach, but we must let go of the old structures that no longer serve us and embrace a new and different future. God's love is enduring and so must be our worship, our witness and our mission of sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ.

"I encourage everyone across the Church to read the General Assembly reports and consider prayerfully how they can play their part."

The Assembly Trustees' report outlines the long-term trends that make the reforms necessary. Fewer people are entering ministry, leading to a higher number of vacant charges, and membership numbers are reducing. These changes have led to a significant shortfall in Church resources and income at a level which is not sustainable to maintain the existing infrastructure.

The report looks at significant work underway to address these challenges and offers a road map for the future based on setting clear priorities, supporting presbyteries and local congregations, and recruiting and training people for leadership and ministry.

The Trustees acknowledge that the mission planning work that started in 2021 with the aim of reorganising parishes at the local level, has been a "challenging and painful experience."

However, it is necessary because "we simply do not have enough people to support the structures which were serviced by previous generations."

To support local mission and growth, the Assembly Trustees are launching a £25 million investment programme over the next seven years. The Seeds for Growth fund will be open to applications from presbyteries and congregations from 1 June.

The Faith Nurture Forum report reviews the extensive work on mission planning that has taken place over the past year. Mission planning aims to help local congregations better serve their communities, through coming together to share ministers and finite resources. The report says:

"Presbytery Mission Planning has been an exercise unlike any other in the living memory of the Kirk. It has touched every Parish within Scotland and beyond. Mission is now embedded at the heart of the Church's thinking and acting."

In 2019, the Faith Nurture Forum was tasked with the development of 100 new worshipping communities and the Pioneer Grant fund awarded grants totalling £100,000 to support these ventures. Congregations now report supporting around 400 new worshipping communities, including Messy Church, Café Church and online worship. The Pioneer Scotland network has grown to 300 members and last year the online ministry Sanctuary First was incorporated into the national Church.

Despite the serious challenges facing the Church and the focus on structural reform, the Faith Impact Forum has continued work on public issues over the past year. Significant contributions have included efforts to amplify the voices of people in poverty as they face a drastic rise in the cost of living; to welcome and advocate for refugees and people seeking asylum; to support peacebuilding in South Sudan, the Middle East and the Korean peninsula; and to support partners working with displaced people in Ukraine and the Mediterranean. Churches have contributed to relief efforts for people affected by natural disasters in Syria and Malawi and worked to prepare the Church to work towards becoming a Net Zero organisation.

Faith Impact staff have also produced a Jewish Christian glossary to help build a shared understanding of the different meanings attached to words that are used by both faith groups.

The General Assembly will be asked to confirm the Church's view on matters affecting public policy, including taking an impartial stance on Scottish Independence, opposing proposed legislation on Assisted Dying and supporting a ban on conversion therapy for lesbian, gay and transgender people.

The Faith Impact Forum will also report on Scotland's legacies of slavery, looking at the ways the Church benefited from the profits of slavery and recommending how it can acknowledge and apologise for the wrongs of the past.

Related research undertaken with local congregations on the experience of minority ethnic groups within the Church has made recommendations on welcoming people from diverse backgrounds within congregations.

The Ecumenical Relations report will ask the Assembly to welcome the signing of the St Margaret Declaration with the Catholic Church on 16 November 2022 and direct the Church to continue work on the theology of friendship. The report includes the St Margaret Liturgy, which churches are encouraged to use.

It will also ask the Assembly to amend the Sacraments Act so that ministers from additional partner denominations can be "authorised to administer the Sacraments by the Presbytery of the bounds, in which matter the Presbytery shall be the sole judge."

The Social Care report will look at the work of CrossReach, which plays a fundamental role in delivering the Church's mission. CrossReach employs 1,800 staff and volunteers in over 70 locations across Scotland. CrossReach services support elderly and disabled people, children and families, and people facing mental health and addiction challenges. The report notes that CrossReach has recently opened a new addictions facility and is continuing to engage with the Scottish Government on the development of a national care service.

Other reports will review the work of military chaplains, the General Trustees' vital work on Church buildings, the Church of Scotland Guild, the Theological Forum, the Legal Questions committee, the Safeguarding committee, the Iona Community, the Investors Trust and the Pension Trustees.

The proceedings will be livestreamed on the Church's website:

<https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/home>

A WEE THOUGHT – FOR TODAY AND BEYOND

WHAT TO DO

A Church in football mad Liverpool had a poster - “What will you do when Jesus comes back to the centre of life?” Some wag wrote - “move St. John to inside-left” (Ian St John was Liverpool centre forward).

WHAT TO DO

A challenge for us in Stepps Parish Church today. As the Church of Scotland’s Mission Plan nears completion and implementation, we should be considering what we can do to make our Church part of the Centre of Life for our community, now in excess of 7,000 people and growing.

I have concerns about the Mission Plan. It is a major undertaking which in my opinion lacks professional nous in the various disciplines that should be utilised in such a task. There appears to be insufficient guidance for congregations on how to engage with or involve the Public. If a professional multi-disciplined management team were tasked with addressing the Church’s problems, Joe Public, our communities, would be a prime target.

WHAT TO DO

Some congregations have taken up the challenge to engage communities. They have increased their social calendars and some openly announcing their Churches might close if communities do not get involved.

WHAT TO DO - IN STEPPS

If we accept, we need to engage with non- aligned local residents, should we: -

- Publicly inform of the threat to the Church.
- Launch a volunteer recruitment drive to assist church organisations.
- Accept that church membership/bodies on pews is not a priority.
- Become involved in community outreach activities.
- Attract increased donations, volunteers for our input to Lodging House Mission.
- Identify and fund community projects manned by non- members.
- Design good news events.
- Be proactive in engaging people to offer skills for Church and premises management.
- Change the format, content, and style of Church services.
- Create a Youth Group in the Church.
- Introduce themed Church services.
- Abandon the Lectionary
- Promote Climate Change activities.
- Purchase a mini- bus for community use.
- Provide more facilities in the Church building.

These are deliberately challenging and controversial. The list is not exhaustive. Please add other ideas or offer comment to Prospect. Something radical is required, church membership and influence is falling.

TO DO NOTHING IS NOT AN OPTION

(While this is one voice, we do welcome the opinion of others)



Pioneer Intro Course

Pioneer Intro is a 6 session introductory course for those interested in what a new church plant or missional project could look like in your context.

Designed for those who are looking to pioneer, permission givers and policy makers - all are welcome.

Wednesday evenings at Partick Victoria Park Church from 3rd May – 7th June
7.00-9.00pm.

Secure your place on the course with Eventbrite:
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/pioneer-intro-glasgow-tickets-566880353397>

Interested in attending please speak to Claire or Lorraine

Calling All Gardeners

Garthamlock & Craigend Community Garden really needs an enthusiastic and passionate person to run our garden and make the best use of the resource in and around our community. Our volunteer numbers are low and we have a perfect opportunity for someone with the right skills and knowledge (and who may be on a waiting list for an allotment or perhaps thinking about giving it up) to take on this new opportunity. We have a fully operational garden with raised beds and an orchard. There is also access to facilities in Garthamlock and Craigend Parish Church where the garden is based. If you are interested or know someone who would be.

Please contact me on 07944448301 after 6:30 pm weekdays.
Jill Reilly

Volunteers Needed

Interested in technology. Do you have experience of IT or software systems? If so, could you offer some of your time to assist with our weekly livestreaming.

The holiday season soon approaches and our hard-working stream team look forward to taking some time out for travel or other commitments.

Would you be willing to operate our audio - visual equipment? Training will be offered and will allow our hard-working volunteers some time away while still being able to offer our weekly livestream worship for those unable to attend in person.

If interested please speak to Lorraine or Marvyn.

Prayer for Sudan



Let Us Pray

Dear Lord,

We are grieved to hear news of violence in Sudan. We especially remember all the children who are being impacted by this conflict and pray for your protection on them and their families.

Lord, we know that people are hurting deeply and our thoughts are with them. You know the hearts of all involved, and we pray that you will heal their hurts - bringing about peace and reconciliation.

Loving Father, we pray for the people of Sudan who have already seen so much devastation in their country. May you comfort them in their grief. Keep the flames of hope alive we pray and restore the nation.

And Lord, we thank you for all the good that has been accomplished in Sudan through World Vision and others. We pray that you will be with aid workers at this time; keep them and their families safe - and may they safely return to their work very soon.

In your name we pray,

Amen.

Prayer Courtesy of World Vision